



The Newsletter of the High Country, Tolland Massachusetts

The Tolland Tattler

Published by the Board of Selectmen

DECEMBER 2004



Season's Greetings



Zoning Options for Back Lot Development
Important Public Hearing for Your Input
Tuesday, January 4, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. Town Hall

If Tolland were to modify its Zoning Bylaw or Subdivision Regulations to permit easier back-lot development it would be a major change with probable long term effects on the town. Your input to this decision is critical – whether or not you have land that could be developed. Change affects us all.

Attend the Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 4th at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall to learn and to make your ideas known -- or communicate directly with any Zoning Bylaw Committee Member.

At Issue: Whether Tolland changes its Zoning to permit development with less than the current 200' or 250' road frontage minimums. Residential development is presently limited primarily by restriction to lots with the required frontage on a Town Road: 275 feet in Zone AR-II, 200 feet in AR-I and Town Center. Since Tolland has very few public roads for its size, there is a lot of back land that can only be developed as a formal subdivision. As a result, almost all recent residential development has been along existing public roads.

Residents interested in developing back land have suggested that the Tolland Zoning Bylaw be modified to make back-lot residential development easier. Such modifications can have broad implications for the future of Tolland, and therefore should be considered carefully before adoption

Liberalization of back lot development restrictions could lead to:

- Greater development than would otherwise be the case
- Increased traffic and the possibility of more driveways along town roads than would occur with current minimum frontage requirements.
- Progressive change from a rural to a more suburban town character
- Increased tax revenue to the Town
- Increased expense for town services and schools.
- Increased taxes over time based on need for more schools and education services
- Increased value of back land property.
- Increased valuation of and thus taxes on back land which may further encourage sale for development
- Potentially negative impacts on existing residences because new homes (not previously permitted) and their utility and driveway corridors may lie close to and/or behind these residences.

Existing Tolland Subdivision Regulations (review copies available at Town Hall and the Library)

The Tolland Subdivision Regulations (1988) permits subdivisions (therefore back lot development) with extensive protections for the town and buyers against improperly designed or failed subdivisions. These regulations are costly for a small development, and, in fact, the regulations have never been used.

The Current Tolland Zoning Bylaw and Minimum Road Frontage Requirements (See Figure 1)

Tolland's minimum frontage requirements sometimes result "bacon strip lots". (See Figure 1, a not-to-scale schematic of five lots.) Because back land cannot be developed it is of low cost and thus elongated lots are sometimes offered. When parcels are fully built out, there is a driveway entrance every 200 or 275 feet along the public road, but this is because under the present
(con't)

(Zoning Options for Back Lot Development - con't)

bylaw the economically most efficient residential development is almost always lots with minimum road frontage.

Some say this is “wasteful” because it creates significant amounts of land that cannot be developed. Purchasers have sometimes used this space to give themselves more setback from the road and thus more privacy and less visibility of dwellings from the road. Minimum frontage has been a major limiting factor to development – and keeping Tolland rural.

Special Permit Alternatives to the Existing Development Options

The Zoning Bylaw Review Committee has been asked to research and present alternatives to the Town and obtain feedback about them before proposing change. A general description of these alternatives follows. Tolland could define and restrict many aspects of any alternatives including increasing minimum lot size for back lots or all lots on a parcel, prohibiting driveways from turning into town roads, limiting the number of back lots per road frontage, etc. There are many possibilities in regulating these alternatives. The following text and Figures are examples only; they are to educate and serve to stimulate discussion. Note: These alternatives are not proposed bylaw changes or legally correct descriptions.

(1) Flag Lot Development (See Figure 2)

“Flag Lot” development, so-called from its appearance on a map (see Figure 2, a not-to-scale schematic) permits development with each back lot having a driveway and utility corridor to the public road (the “flag staff”), which is part of the lot. Flag lots are typically restricted in several ways. Figure 2 shows the effect of the restriction: “No two flag lots may adjoin and only one flag lot per front lot.” This restriction leads to a maximum of a 50% increase in the number of residential lots and a 50% increase in the number of driveways. Adding a flag lot to a minimum frontage lot also creates a non-conforming front lot with inadequate frontage and possibly inadequate side setback. Flag lots are legally and administratively the simplest addition to minimum frontage zoning because no difficulties are created over common ownership and the maintenance of common property.

(2) Back Lot Development with Common Driveways (See Figure 3)

Back lots developed with common driveway and utility corridors offer flexibility at the cost of practical and legal questions surrounding the safety, access, status and maintenance of the common property. Legal covenants are required. Legal agreements do not, however, assure that residents or the town will never have to “go to court”.

Figure 3, a not-to-scale schematic, illustrates the approach under the restriction, “Only one back lot allowed for each front lot”. This restriction permits up to double development. Common driveways can reduce the number of driveway entrances on public roads. As shown on the figure, eight residential lots could use a common drive by with only two driveway entrances along the road. If front lot owners choose a direct road entrance, more driveways than the no-back-lot case can result.

Back Lot Development with Frontage Set Asides (See Figure 4)

Some towns permit back lot development with legal and permanent set asides of open space along town roads. Figure 4 is an example of such development. There are numerous possible configurations and illustrations. Common driveways/roads and open space set asides are usually owned and maintained by a Community Association. Requirements could include larger minimum lot size, maximum number of lots, requirements for Open Space land use and maintenance, etc. Restrictions could include prohibition of roads or common driveways becoming town roads. Definition and regulation of such developments is a complex matter, and there is always the danger of the unintended proliferation of small developments which bypass the current subdivision regulation protections.

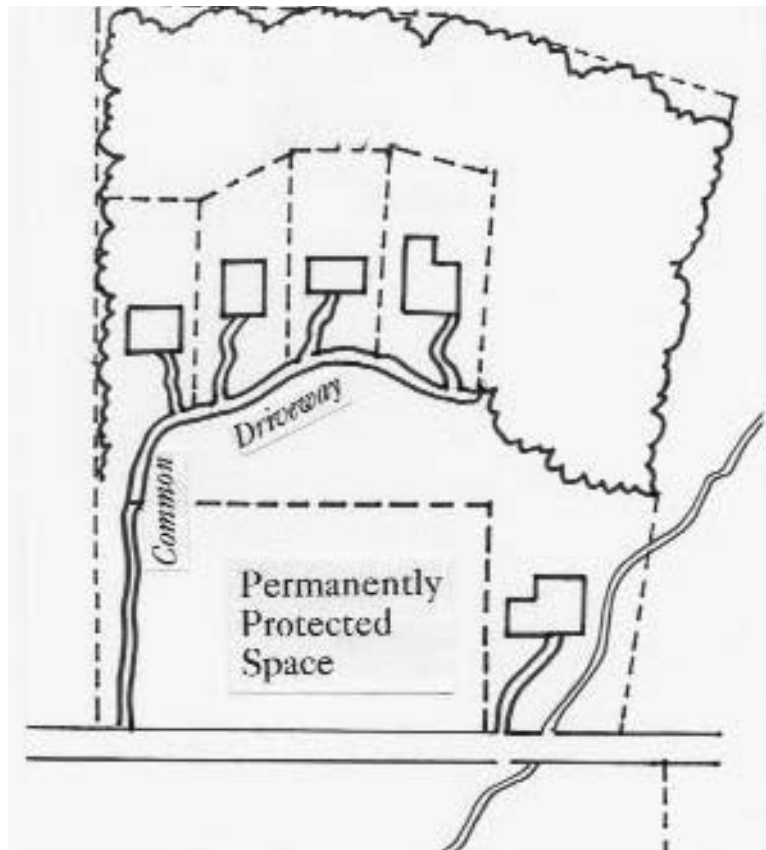


Figure 4: Back Lot Development with Frontage Set-aside

Sandisfield Arts Center

SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER PRESENTS HOLIDAY PROGRAM

On Saturday, December 4th at 8 p.m., The Sandisfield Arts Center presents its second annual Christmas Extravaganza. The program takes place at the Arts Center on Route 57 in Sandisfield, and features two short plays, a holiday story, a stand-up comic, and carol singing. All are welcome. Admission is \$5. Children are admitted free and holiday refreshments will be served.

“The Little Christmas Tree” by Victorian writer, Henry van Dyke, is a children’s play about a little pine tree always wishing it would look more splendid and colorful like the other trees in the forest. “Gabriel Grub’s Christmas Revelation” is a Dickens play starring Ben Luxon of Sandisfield and George Preston of Tolland featuring a world-hating village sexton and gravedigger who is made aware of the folly of his ways on Christmas Eve.

Sandisfield’s resident author and playwright, Val Coleman, will read a holiday story of his own creation, written especially for this evening. Comic, Walter Dixon, presents his impressions of the “festive” season, while local entertainer, Karl Finger, will lead the audience and Christmas choir in carol singing. Holiday art by Sandisfield children will be displayed on the lower level. Sandisfield 2005 calendars and notecards will also be available.

For directions, call (413) 258-4994 or visit www.sandisfieldartscenter.org

The Tolland Fire Department



The Department has seen a busy season this summer. The Department responded to the following calls:

July - 1 motor vehicle accident
2 medical calls
1 power lines down

August - 5 medical calls
1 power lines down
1 tree into a house
1 structure fire
1 motor vehicle accident

September - 1 mutual aid to Granville
1 false alarm
2 medical calls
1 motorcycle accident

October - 1 assist the State Police

The Department has also been busy with many inspections, trainings and drills. Several of the departments' members successfully completed the Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational Training, a 24 hour course which covers procedures and techniques used in response to incidents involving hazardous materials.

With the cold weather rapidly approaching, please remember to check your smoke detectors and have your chimneys cleaned.

The open air burning season is just around the corner, opening on January 15, 2005. The permitting process will be the same this year. A written permit will be available, beginning in January. Permits will be in the mailbox attached to the police shed at the transfer station. A written permit should be completed, one copy left in the mailbox and one taken home. One written permit is good for the entire burning season. On the day of the proposed burn, call the phone number on the form to see if burning is allowed on that day. Please be aware that burning permits will be suspended in the spring when the snow starts to disappear. Also be aware that the Wildwood Property Owners Association has prohibited open air burning.

Have a safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Mark Bredenfoerder, Tolland Fire Chief

Space Heaters Pose Safety Hazards

WMECO Encourages Customers to stay safe while staying warm.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 fires and 300 deaths every year are associated with portable space heaters. With the rising oil and gas prices, many consumers may turn to portable electric space heaters for comfort. Western Massachusetts Electric Company encourages consumers to understand the risks and follow these simple tips to help consumers stay safe while staying warm this winter.

- Never use a gas stove, electric range or a charcoal grill as a space heater.
- Keep at least 3 feet of open space around all portable heaters and away from combustible materials, including furniture, bedding, clothing, pets and people.
- Space heaters must not be left operating when you are not in the room, or when you go to sleep.
- Children should be supervised at all times when space heaters are in use.
- Never drape clothes, shoes or gloves over a space heater to dry them.
- Check for fraying or splitting wires or overheating. Have any problems repaired by a professional before operating the space heater.
- Unless the heater is designed for use outdoors or in bathrooms, do not use in these areas. The moisture may damage parts and result in fire or electrical shock.
- Use only heaters that have been tested and listed in accordance with Underwriters' Laboratories (UL). Look for the UL sticker on the portable heater to make sure it has been checked.
- Leave your heater on the floor, not on a chair, kitchen counter, table or elevated surface, making it less apt to be knocked over and starting a fire.
- Place a strip of sheet metal between the heater and any wood, linoleum or tile floor; portable heaters can become extremely hot.

Lee Regional Visiting Nurse Association, Inc.

This is to let you know that all flu clinics have been canceled due to not receiving any flu vaccine. Please encourage anyone 65 years with a chronic medical condition to contact their primary care physician. If we should receive any state supplied flue vaccine, we will set up a flu clinic. The #1 step to prevent the spread of flu is to WASH HANDS frequently.

Sincerely, Wendy Tryon, RN

The Tolland Public Library

There is so much to tell... where to begin...

This past fall was spent busily filling out state reports, one of which is a survey of annual activity in the library. The numbers are great! Our total materials circulation went from 1953 items to 2675. That is a 37% increase in materials going out the door! Attendance at the library went from 673 to 998, up 48%. I am really pleased that people are taking advantage of what the library has to offer.

I would like to offer a public THANK YOU to Carol Finnigan who spends so much of her summer time at the library saying her ABCs, counting, dusting, straightening. She is an enormous help catching up on the little jobs. Thank you, Carol.

The library has an old computer and printer to get rid of. The pc needs a lot of work, runs off of Windows 95, and includes monitor, keyboard and mouse. The printer is an EpsonL570+. Bids for the equipment will be accepted at the library through December 31, 2004.

The holiday season is here. We have a huge selection of holiday books, movies and audios. Children's books, adult fiction, Christmas mysteries and love stories, craft projects, and decorating ideas. School vacation is coming. Be sure you have enough entertainment on hand.

The library is sponsoring a GRINCH NIGHT at the Tolland Town Hall on December 10th at 7:00 pm. Please join in the fun. Lots of crafts and projects. We will end with a viewing of the animated version of How the Grinch Stole Christmas and Grinch TV food. Everyone is encouraged to wear their comfy clothes, bring a pillow, sleeping bag or whatever as we hit the floor to watch. Everybody is welcome. Try this word search to get in the mood. Hope to see you there!

Everybody is welcome. Try this word search to get in the mood.
Hope to see you there!



The Tolland Public Library Sponsors

GRINCH NIGHT



at the Tolland Town Hall

Friday December 10 at 7:00pm
Celebrate a holiday tradition with...

Grinch Crafts...

Who food...

and a special tribute to
Max the Dog



Then we all hit the floor to watch Dr. Seuss' animated classic

How the Grinch Stole Christmas



Bring a pillow and a blanket for the viewing

Do something different this holiday season...Get GRINCHED!



Tolland Weather



TOLLAND WEATHER

Prepared by Steve Strinie

Period: October 17 to November 20, 2004

Elevation: 1500 feet above sea level.

Temperature:	High - 64 degrees F. on Nov 7 at 3:00pm Low - 15 degrees F. on Nov 10 at 7:00am
Humidity:	Maximum - 100% several times Minimum - 26% on Oct. 28 at 3:00pm
Dewpoint:	Maximum - 57 degrees on Oct 31 at 3:00am Minimum - 8 degrees on Nov 9 at 2:00pm
Barometric Pressure:	Maximum - 30.67" on Nov 14 at 8:00am Minimum - 29.4" on Nov 5 at 2:00am
Wind Speed:	52 mph Northwest on Nov 5 at 2:00pm
Wind Chill:	-7 degrees on Nov 14 at 7:00am
Total Rain Fall	1.94 inches
Total Snowfall	4.75 inches

The Tolland Recreation Committee

The Halloween Party sponsored by the Tolland Recreation Committee was a huge success. It was attended by some thirty children and their parents on a spooky, foggy Saturday afternoon. The Recreation Committee would like to thank Kathy Bonadies for generously donating the use of her field. The party would not have been half as fun elsewhere. Thanks to the Tolland Volunteer Fire Department for the use and assembly of the tent, tables and chairs. Thanks to the Tolland DPW for giving their time and going above and beyond responsibilities and expectations. Thanks to Joanne Duval and her animals for the use of the hay. Thanks to Sue Voudren for her time and generous donations. Here is to the success of everyone's effort and hoping for more fun events in the future.

*This newsletter is partially funded by:
The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs.*

Christmas Carol Sing

Bring your family to the Carol sing on the Tolland Green and enjoy the warmth of friends at the library after the sing. Hot chocolate and goodies will be served.

note: bring a flashlight.

Sunday, December 19 at 5:00 pm.

Join in on an old fashioned

Cookie Swap

Tuesday December 21 at 7:00pm

at Kathy Bonadies' house.

We have always had a great time at the swap and the cookies are good, too!

Questions: contact Shirley at 258-4255 or any Women's Club member.

*** * ***

Holiday Dinner Party

Saturday, January 22 at Storowton Tavern

Contact Shirley Warner (258-4255) with reservations or questions.



We want to thank everyone attending our Family Bingo Night

It was a success and we all had fun.

The Tolland Cultural Council is asking for suggestions

for events, either social or educational, and of general interest that the council could sponsor through the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Funding to all Cultural Councils in our state is on a yearly basis and the intent is to promote excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences in order to improve the quality of life for all Massachusetts residents and contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

Please direct your suggestions in writing to the Tolland Cultural Council at the Town Hall: 241 West Granville Road, Tolland MA 01034



to the Editor

Letters to the editor should be typed, signed, and received by the 20th of the month deadline for insertion in the following months newsletter.

Opinions expressed in 'Letters to the Editor' reflect the opinions of the writer and not necessarily those of the Publisher or Editor.

Tolland Fire Department
162 Colebrook River Road
Tolland, MA 01034

November 12, 2004

There have been numerous requests in the past few weeks for the Tolland Volunteer Fire Department to respond to the 'Letter to the Editor' section of the Tattler.

First, let us say that we are always willing to vote to accept new members or past members whom we feel would be an asset to this department and the community of Tolland. We, as an association, try to take in all the facts about an applicant and then we discuss their ability and willingness to fill certain positions on the fire department. We have done it this way in the past and will continue to do the best we can as an association in the future.

Our vote last month did not come easy to us and required much soul searching on every member's part.

Any townspeople who would like to know all the facts that brought us to our vote last month should feel free to contact any member of this department with your concerns or questions, or stop by the firehouse any Tuesday evening between 7pm-9pm

Sincerely, The Tolland Volunteer Fire Department

To the Tolland Board of Selectmen:

Dear Sirs;

This August, the home of Ron and Lorraine Reiss on Pinewood Drive in Driftwood Shores was struck by lightning and sustained significant damage. Ron called 9-1-1- to get emergency assistance. The response of the Fire Department, Police Department, and Highway Department was fast, professional, thorough, and caring. Special thanks are given to John P. of the Highway Department for helping above and beyond the call of duty.

It is a real comfort to all of us to know that when there is a problem, the town is so responsive. On behalf of the residents of Driftwood Shores, I wish to thank all of you for the help you provided the Reiss family.

Sincerely,
E. Patrick Storey, Jr., President, Driftwood Shores

Letters to the Editor continued

To the Townspeople of Tolland:

On October 19, 2004, Ray Skibski withdrew his request for a small business permit. It was never his intention to cause the townspeople and especially our neighbors any stress, anxiety or anger. He merely wanted to do a service to the community by saving people money so they didn't have to pay overly-inflated auto repair bills. Most dealerships now charge \$75 to \$100 per hour labor plus a 40 % mark-up on parts. He never would have charged people that much, and really would have saved them a lot of money. We were also hoping to use the extra income to help pay for the college education of our three daughters.

Sincerely, Ann Skibski

Congratulations to Sharon Messenger on her new position as a school secretary at the Woodland Elementary School. When parents from town visit the school it will be nice to see a familiar friendly face. I hope you enjoy your new job for years to come.

Sincerely, Wesley D. Greene II

Tolland Council on Aging

COA Foot Clinic on Dec. 10

The Tolland Council on Aging will hold a foot clinic for Tolland seniors on Friday, December 10, 2004 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Tolland Town Hall. Joan Marie Angelo, Certified Foot Nurse, will conduct the clinic. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Gert McKay, Tolland COA Chairperson, to make an appointment because the space is limited. Gert can be reached at 258-3336. The Clinic is being funded through a grant to the Tolland Council on Aging from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Tolland Seniors Invited to Granville Village School Concert on Dec. 16

Granville Village School students will hold their annual concert for seniors on Thursday, December 16, 2004 at the Granville Village School, Main Rd., Granville, beginning at 1:45 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Tolland as well as Granville seniors are invited to attend. The Granville Council on Aging is providing refreshments. Please RSVP if possible to Betty Carpenter at 357-8557 so that we know how many will attend. Also, if you need transportation to the concert, call Gert McKay, Tolland COA Chairperson, at 258-3336, and she will try to arrange a ride.

Breakfast with Santa!



The Granville-Tolland Lion's Club will be hosting the annual "Breakfast With Santa", Saturday, December 11th from 7:00am to 11:00am at the Fellowship Hall below the Granville Federated Church, Granville, MA. The ALL You Can Eat-Pancake-Sausage-Bacon-Juice and Coffee breakfast, hosted by Santa and his Helpers is \$5.00 for Adults and \$2.00 for Children 6-12 years, and free for children 5 years and under. So kids, come tell Santa what your wishing for! Proceeds from this event are donated by the Lion's to support: Massachusetts based Eye Research, Community based Emergency Services and Local Youth Sports.

We'll see you there!

*Saturday, December 11 from 7-11am
Fellowship Hall-Granville Federated Church
Granville, MA*

MISTY MOUNTAIN REALTY

Offering Country Homes and Acreage,
Woodland & Waterfront Properties
in Tolland, Sandisfield
& The Berkshires

*NEW BOSTON VILLAGE
ROUTE 8 SANDISFIELD*

Phone: (413) 258-4912

Fax: (413) 258-4280

Email: mistymtn@vgernet.net

Connie Canty - Broker/Owner, CBR
Bob Donaldson - Broker/Owner, CBR

Realtor
MLS

Corner of Route 57 and Bosworth Road

Take a break from stress...

Have a massage in your home

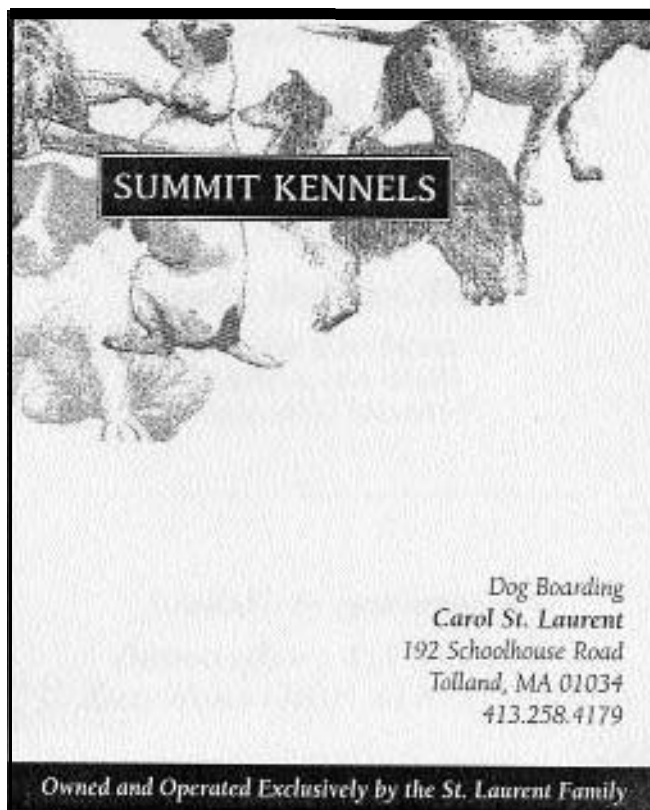
Call to set up an
appointment now
413-212-1146

Heidi Cowles LMT

On Site Services:

- Chair Massage
- Full-hour Table Massage
- Hot Stone
- Reiki
- Swedish Massage

*Heidi Cowles LMT -
Certified • Professional • Insured*



SUMMIT KENNELS

Dog Boarding
Carol St. Laurent
192 Schoolhouse Road
Tolland, MA 01034
413.258.4179

Owned and Operated Exclusively by the St. Laurent Family

Thinking of buying or selling a house or land?

^{contact}
Bob Rahn
Park Square Realty
357-9090
bobrahn@bobrahn.com



We have the hometown advantage!

I have buyers now for homes and land in Tolland.
Please visit my website at www.bobrahn.com



Working together for you in Massachusetts and Connecticut!

- For Real Estate in Connecticut

Contact:
Owner/Broker: Kelly Sullivan
518 Main Street
Winsted, CT 06098

Phone: 860.738.1902
Fax: 860.738.1997

- For Real Estate in the Berkshire County MLS

Contact - Local Realtors:
Don or Mary and Donald Turek
Sandisfield, Massachusetts 01255

Phone: 413.258.4430
Fax: 413.258.4430
email: dturekmass@sbcglobal.net

bill lord
vice president



Motorcycles



THE NEW AMERICAN MOTORCYCLE

Store Hours

Sunday & Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 9:30 - 7:00 pm

Wednesday: 9:30 - 6:00pm

Thursday: 9:30 - 7:00pm

Friday: 9:30 - 6:00pm

Saturday: 9:00 - 4:00pm

sales@cantoncycles.com www.cantoncycles.com

70 SOUTH MAIN STREET
RT 44 & RT 8, BOX 642, WINSTED, CT 06098

Phone: 860-738-1718

FAX: 860-738-1731

Tolland Mountain BUILDERS

Quality Homes from Frame to Finish

P.O. Box 633 • Sandisfield, MA 01255

Steve Della Giustina
413 258-4996

MA Lic.
038268

Nick DellaGiustina
413 258-2821



Now booking for the Winter Season

THE NEW BOSTON INN



At the junction of Routes 8 & 57 in Sandisfield, Mass. 01255

New Owner Barbara Colorio

invites you to Lunch and Dinner

- *Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday - noon to 8 pm*
 - *Friday and Saturday - noon to 9pm*
 - *Dinner specials served nightly after 4pm*

Reservations appreciated - Call 258-4477

Town Hall Hours:

Mon. & Tues. - 8:00am to 4:00pm

Town Clerk's and Assessor Clerk's hours:

Monday - 1:00pm - 4:00pm

DECEMBER 2004



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Library Hours: Mon. 3:00pm - 8:30pm Thurs. 11:00am - 4:00pm Sat. 10:00am -12:00pm			1 Finance Comm Meeting-6pm 5 - 7:00pm DUMP	2	3 Rockathon 6:00pm	4 9 - 11:00 am DUMP
5 3:00 - 7:00 pm DUMP	6 5 - 6:00pm Building Insp. 6:00pm Selectmen	7	8 5 - 7:00pm DUMP	9	10 Grinch Night at Town Hall 7:00pm	11 9 - 11:00 am DUMP
12 3:00 -7:00 pm DUMP	13 5 - 6:00pm Building Insp. 6:00pm Selectmen	14	15 7:00 pm Zoning Board of Appeals 5-7:00pm DUMP	16	17	18 9 - 11:00 am DUMP
19 Christmas Carol Sing 5:00 on Town Green 3:00 - 7:00 pm DUMP	20 5 - 6:00pm Building Insp. 6:00pm Selectmen 7:00pm Planning Board	21 Women's Club Cookie Swap at 7:00pm at Bonadies	22 5-7:00pm DUMP	23	24	25 Library Closed 9 - 11:00 am DUMP
26 3:00 - 7:00 pm DUMP	27 5 - 6pm Building Insp. 6:00 pm Selectmen	28	29 5-7:00pm DUMP	30	31	

THE TOLLAND TATTLER is a monthly newsletter, and a non-profit, volunteer publication by the Board of Selectmen of Tolland, Massachusetts. It is distributed free to residents. The Tolland Tattler solicits news and calendar items from town boards and community groups, and will try to print all the news received. The editor does not write news, but reserves the right to edit all copy.

DEADLINE: Copy and calendar events must be received by the 20th of each month. Items can be mailed to the Town Hall, dropped off at the Town Hall or by E-Mail to: jeanwillow@crocker.com

ADVERTISING RATES AND SIZES: Prices and mechanical specifications can be obtained by contacting:

The Tolland Tattler
Jean Jinks, Editor
Tolland Town Hall
241 West Granville Road
Tolland MA 01034

PHONE: 413-258-4217
E-MAIL jeanwillow@crocker.com